

0436. MOZART TO HIS FATHER, SALZBURG

À / Monsieur / Monsieur Leopold Mozart / maitre de la Chapelle de
S:A:R: / L'archeveque de et à / Salzbourg¹

Monsieur
mon très cher Père!²

[Mannheim, 11th March, 1778]

[5] I have received your last letter³ of 5 March safely, and read there with great joy that our good and best friend Baron Grimm⁴ is in Paris. It is quite true that we are leaving here on the coming Saturday, the 14th, but whether we are going by *diligence*⁵ and whether we are going via Strassburg⁶ or Metz is not yet decided, but everything will be settled tomorrow morning. [10] Perhaps I can still write to you with the certain and true facts, since the post does not leave until tomorrow evening, and everything has to be concluded by then. Regarding selling the chaise,⁷ it is proving very difficult for us, but it has to be sold, whatever we may get for it, for if I leave it behind here in the meantime, it would end up waiting in the long queue, [15] and after I had had the honour of paying a gulden⁸ for it every month, I would perhaps not get more than 4 *louis d'or*⁹ for it at most. Today there was a hired driver here, and he has gone up from 30 guildens to 38: perhaps I can yet get him up to 40. He simply says that the box is still very good, but he has no use for the chassis. [20] He will come here tomorrow morning, and if he gives me 40 florins for it, I will, in God's name, simply give it to him. This is exactly the same hired driver who is willing to take us from here to Paris via Metz |: which, as you will already know, is the shorter way |: for 11 *louis d'or*. If he will do it for 10 *louis* tomorrow, I will quite certainly take him, and perhaps [25] for 11 too, for it is indeed still cheaper, which is a major point, and with more commodiousness into the bargain, for he is taking our chaise, that is, he is putting the box on his chassis; the commodiousness is priceless, for we have so many bits and pieces which we can keep quite elegantly in our chaise, which we could not do in the post-coach, [30] and subsequently we are alone, can speak about whatever we wish. For I assure you that if I really do still go by post-coach, I have no worries about anything except the sadness of not being able to speak about whatever one wishes and what is on one's mind, and since it is now necessary for us to pursue the cheapest option, I am not very inclined towards it at all. [35] The difference will of course not be all that great, yet there is one; and the main thing is simply the commodiousness, for I pay attention to that because of mother. Now, tomorrow I will be able to write in more detail about this. There will definitely be a difference of one or one and a half *louis d'or*, for we would then indeed have to buy yet another case, and a couple of cushions, for they say that the post-coach bumps so much; [40] nor is that anything but natural, because it is stone-paved the whole way. I beg your forgiveness for writing so badly and so little today, but I still have so much to do that I

¹ = "To Monsieur Leopold Mozart, music director to His Royal Majesty the Archbishop of and in Salzbourg".

² = "My very dear father".

³ BD: No. 0434.

⁴ BD: Friedrich Melchior von Grimm (1723-1807), 1748 private secretary to the Saxon Count [Graf] Friese, with whom he moved to Paris, where he was in contact with the Encyclopaedists. Various publications, one of which, in 1763, mentioned the Mozart children. His relationship with Mozart broke down in 1778 during the latter's stay in Paris.

⁵ BD: Large coach typically used on regular mail routes, but also with room for passengers.

⁶ Strasbourg.

⁷ BD: The family chaise with which Wolfgang and his mother travelled from Salzburg to Mannheim.

⁸ BD: Florins and guildens can be considered to have the same value.

⁹ BD: Various exchange rates and been used in recent letters, from 8 florins to 11 florins per louis d'or. The latter rate would lead to a total price of 44 florins.

do not know where to start. Take especially good care of yourself in the meantime. Within about a fortnight after you have read this letter, I hope you will already have received my first one from Paris. [45] I kiss your hands 1000 times, and embrace my sister with my whole heart, and am, until death, your most obedient son,

Mannheim, 11th March, 1778

Wolfgang Amadé Mozart

P.S. *Apropòs*.¹⁰ I would ask you for that which I requested from you a long time ago, that is, to send me an ABC¹¹ in your hand with both capital and small letters. [50] Do not forget it, I beg you. In your last letter you wrote to me that I should send you the address of Herr Weber¹² so that you can send him the other arias.¹³ If they have not yet been copied, I would wish to ask you to have them written on small-format paper |: N.B. if there is any left :| so that the post does not cost quite so much.

[55] *à Monsieur* Fridelin Weber

à

the cabinetmaker Mannheim
opposite the lottery house.

Addieu. My compliments to all good friends, both gentlemen and ladies, [60] especially to my best friend, Herr Bullinger.¹⁴

The contract with the hired driver has just been concluded. For 11 *louis d'or* he is driving us to Paris with our own chaise, which he has bought off us for 40 florins. Tomorrow I will have it put in writing that I only have to pay him 7 *louis d'or* and 4 florins¹⁵ to go to Paris because I did not [65] take payment for the chaise.

¹⁰ Here: = "By the way".

¹¹ BD: Requested in No. 0405/95.

¹² BD: Franz Fridolin Weber (1733-1779): Initially a high administrative official [Amtmann], then employed at the court in Mannheim as a bass, prompter and music copyist. Moved to Munich with the court in 1778, then to Vienna when his daughter Aloisia was engaged there as a singer in 1779. He died shortly afterwards on 23rd October, 1779. Cf. No. 0405/29.

¹³ BD: Wolfgang had requested Leopold to send a number of arias which he wished to give to Aloisia Weber. Cf. No. 0430/56-57, 68

¹⁴ BD: Wolfgang assumed the conversion rate of 11 florins per *louis d'or*. He would therefore pay the coachman the fee of 121 florins minus the price for the sale of the chaise, 40 florins = 81 florins. The 81 florins are then paid as 7 *louis d'or* [77 florins] plus 4 florins.

¹⁵ BD: The original purchase price was 80 florins, cf. No. 0401/78-79.